

Guidelines for Master's Thesis in Logistics

1. General format requirements

There are two different formats for the written thesis. First, the traditional monography and second, a research paper-based format. This document will introduce some general guidelines for both.

General requirements for both types:

- **Language:** English (except the Applied Master Thesis, where Norwegian or English can be used).
- **Font:** Usually Times New Roman, 12 pt. In main headings, a larger font is used.
- **Spacing:** Text 1.5, Tables, indents (names) and figure captions 1
- **Marginal:** Top margins 2.5 cm-4.0 cm, bottom 2.5 cm, left 3.0 cm, right 2.5 cm
- **Page number:** Bottom right corner or centred
- **Reference style:** Author-date style (Chicago, Harvard or APA)

Body of the text

When writing the body of the text, pay special attention to the following four issues: headings, tables, figures, and references in the text.

Headings

Your headings should make stand-alone sense and be to the point. All the subheadings should be logically related to their main heading, i.e., they should be conceptually in parallel. A subheading should not follow the main heading without any intervening text; it is good for the reader to always know what will be happening next. Under one section heading, please avoid more than two lower-level headings.

Examples:

- Chapter 2
- Section 2.1, 2.2
- Subsections 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.2.1
- Avoid four-numbered subsections, such as 2.1.1.1. Instead, you can mark subheadings in italics.

Tables, Figures and Appendices

Tables and Figures are numbered independently and consequently (e.g., Table 1 and Figure 1). The Tables and Figures should make sense on their own and they should be commented in the text. The captions must be placed consistently. Place the Table captions above the table and Figure captions below the Figure.

Tables and figures that are not essential for the text can be included as appendices at the end of the thesis, e.g., questionnaire forms and interviews. The title of the appendix (which appears in the List of appendices) should be written on top of the page. Appendices are also numbered. Whenever an appendix is attached, it must be referred to in the text.

References in the text and Reference list

In general, in academic writing, the conventional method to cite an author is to give his/her name as early as possible so that the reader always knows “who is speaking”, i.e., whose ideas are being discussed. If you copy an author’s text word by word it is called quoting. In this case place the words or sentences in quotation marks. Direct quoting should be avoided in scientific writing and it is preferred to paraphrase (unless you quote frequently from the literature that is being analyzed (quite common in arts and humanities subjects)):

It has been stated that “Molde University College have one of the best Logistics master programs in Europe” (Olsen, 2017, p. 15).

For more information about reference styles, see the service “Search and write”: <https://sokogskriv.no/en/sources-and-references/reference-styles/>, or ask the library.

2. Monography

There are no strict rules on how many pages the thesis on this form should be, but typically, the length spans from 60-100 pages. If two students write together, the typical length are 80-120 pages. However, the number of pages depend on the subject. E.g., theses within the discipline of mathematics or quantitative topics will tend to have a smaller number of pages than theses within SCM.

The outline of the thesis report can vary, and there is no explicit outline which is correct for all types of theses. Your headings, order of the chapters, sections and the number of pages are not restricted to the suggestions below. **You should make your own structure and good names for the headings in a logical sequence.** A typical outline can look like this:

- TITLE PAGE (from the template)
- PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
- ABSTRACT/SUMMARY
- TABLE OF CONTENTS
- LIST OF TABLES (optional)
- LIST OF FIGURES (optional)
- 1 INTRODUCTION (2-4 pages)
 - 1.1 Introduction/motivation/background for the thesis
 - 1.2 Research objectives/questions
 - 1.3 Structure of the thesis
- 2 LITERATURE REVIEW (20-30 pages)
 - 2.1 Review Part 1
 - 2.2 Review Part 2
 - 2.3 Theoretical framework
- 3 CASE DESCRIPTION (5-10 pages)
- 4 DATA AND METHODS (5-10 pages)
 - 4.1 Data
 - 4.2 Methods
- 5 FINDINGS (5-15 pages)
- 6 DISCUSSION (3-10 pages)
- 7 CONCLUSIONS (1-2 pages)
 - 7.1 RESEARCH SUMMARY

7.2 MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS
7.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY
7.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH
REFERENCES
APPENDICES

3. Research Paper Based Thesis

This type of thesis consists of two main parts: an introduction and the Research paper. This type of thesis tends to have fewer pages than the monography, e.g., 50-70 pages, but it is not necessarily easier to write for that matter. In a research paper, the theoretical framework is not always included, or it is very short. The same is for the literature review, description of the industry etc. The outline for both the introduction and the research paper is more or less similar. In the introduction, you should elaborate the subjects, which are just a short paragraph in the paper.

Introduction part:

Your headings and order of the chapters and sections and the number of pages are not restricted to the suggestions below. You should find your own structure and good names for the headings in a logical sequence. A typical outline for the introduction part is:

TITLE PAGE (from the template)
PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
ABSTRACT/SUMMARY
1.1 INTRODUCTION/MOTIVATION/BACKGROUND FOR THE THESIS (2-5 PAGES)
1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES/QUESTIONS
2. LITERATURE REVIEW/THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK (10-20 pages)
3. CASE DESCRIPTION (5-10 pages)
4. DATA AND METHODS (5-10 pages)
5. CONCLUSIONS (1-2 pages)
6. RESEARCH SUMMARY (2-4 PAGES)
6.2 MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS
6.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY
6.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The Research paper:

The research paper should follow a general academic style for international journals. Total number of pages in a Research paper should not exceed 20 pages. A typical outline of a paper is:

1. ABSTRACT
2. INTRODUCTION
3. LITERATURE REVIEW
4. CASE DESCRIPTION (e.g., if you use a company-based case)
5. METHODS and DATA
6. RESULTS
7. DISCUSSION
8. CONCLUSION
9. REFERENCES